SRI International

*Final Report—Objective E, Tasks 1 and 2*
*Covering the Period 1 October 1987 to 30 September 1988*

*December 1988*

# FEEDBACK AND TARGET DEPENDENCIES IN REMOTE VIEWING EXPERIMENTS (U)

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# I INTRODUCTION (U)

(U) One of the intriguing questions about remote viewing (RV) and similar kinds of experiments is the extent to which feedback influences the results. For example, in FY 1987 SRI International conducted an experiment which showed that subject performance did not seem to be dependent on the intensity of the feedback provided.* The feedback intensities in that experiment, however, were all minimal and did not allow for detailed study of the target.

(U) In FY 1988 we created a new target pool. This pool is contained on video disks and consists of short movie segments, natural scenes, and other composite target material. Some of the targets have no sound; some contain music only but no words; and some have complete conversations. Thus, various targets differ in both visual and audio complexity.

(U) In all of the experiments for which this target pool has been used, the subjects have been given feedback by viewing the video disk segment selected as the target. For all of the experiments covered in this report, feedback was vivid in the sense that the subjects could view the target segment as many times as desired.

(U) The purpose of the task covered by this report was to see if the quality of these remote viewings (as measured by rank-order judging) differed based on an amalgam of target type and feedback complexity. Because the target pool was not constructed specifically with this task in mind, we were unable to differentiate between the effects of target type and feedback complexity.†

We examined the ranks assigned by judges when each video disk segment was the intended target, compared with the ranks assigned when that segment was not the intended target. We found that the targets in the "natural" category, which were more homogeneous than the other targets, tended to result in better remote viewings. Further, of the individual targets, one resulted in a significant sum of ranks. That particular target did not receive higher than

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* (U) May, E. C. and Lantz, N. D., "Feedback and Precognition Dependent Remote Viewing Experiments (U)," Final Report, Objective F, Tasks 1a and 1b, Project 1291, SRI International, Menlo Park, California (December 1987)

† (U) This report constitutes the deliverable for Objective E, Tasks 1 and 2. Due to project priorities, separate experiments were not performed for these Objectives.

chance ranks when it was not the intended target, so the result is not due to bias on the part of the judge.

The series of remote viewings was not significant overall, but the significant findings in the previous paragraph allow us to make some tentative conclusions (Section IV). In addition, many of the subjects in this experiment were novices who were being tested to see whether or not they had any special abilities. Therefore, the trends observed in this report may be enhanced when working with subjects who are able to produce higher quality remote viewings overall.

## II METHOD OF APPROACH (U)

### A. (U) Purpose

(U) In FY 1988 SRI conducted a series of experiments to try to find people with remote viewing ability. Because of the nature of the target pool used for this series, it was possible to determine whether the complexity of the target and corresponding feedback had an influence on the quality of the results.

### B. (U) Target Pool

(U) The target pool used for these experiments consisted of 16 segments on video disks, each one slightly more than a minute long. They were divided into four categories, with four targets in each category. The categories and short titles for the targets are listed in Tables 1 and 2 in Section III.

(U) The targets in the "projects" category contained no sound; the "natural" targets were set to music, with few or no words; and the targets in the other two categories each had soundtracks containing words and sometimes music as well.

(U) The four projects targets are the least dynamic of the pool. Each of these consists of a series of five-second segments of the project name alone interspersed with five seconds of photographic material related to the purpose of the project represented by the word. For example, the Project Ultra target consists of the words "Project Ultra" for half of the feedback time and various still photographs of equipment, people, and the bombed-out cathedral at Coventry interspersed for the other half of the time. To accurately describe this target would have required a high level of cerebral functioning.

(U) The natural targets, on the other hand, are the most homogeneous. For example, the Greek temple target consists of an aerial view of a Greek temple on the top of a mountain, taken from a circling helicopter; the skiing target consists of a scene from a James Bond movie of a skier moving down a mountain and off a cliff, all set to music.

(U) The military and science/industrial targets were almost all segments from movies, consisting of conversations and several different scenes.

C. (U) Experiments

(U) The results of all of the individual trials conducted with this target pool were used for this task. The results of the group tests could not be used because they were scored differently. Most of the data comes from the second-level screening, which was done with subjects who had performed well on a qualitative assessment in the group screening. Further details of the screening are given in the Objective B, Task 1, final report, Mass Screening For Psychoenergetic Talent Using A Remote Viewing Task.

# III RESULTS (U)

(U) The remote viewing trials were scored by assigning ranks to the actual target and the three other possible targets within the same category. For example, if the intended target was the Greek temple, then the response would be compared with the four targets in the natural category and a rank would be assigned to each one. For the analysis in this report, the Greek temple would be designated as the intended target, and the other three natural targets would be designated as unintended targets.

Table 1 shows the distribution of ranks that were assigned to the intended target by an RV analyst. For example, the aircraft-carrier-takeoff target in the military category was randomly chosen as the intended target 5 times. It was ranked first 2 times, and it was ranked second, third and fourth once each. Table 2 shows similar data, but for the unintended targets. Suppose that the Greek Temple is the intended target; then for that trial, the ostriches, skiing, and waterfall targets are unintended. Thus, for each trial in the series there is one entry in Table 1, and there are three entries in Table 2. There are a total of 85 remote viewings represented.

The most interesting result is that the sum of ranks for the trials in the natural category is independently significant. Out of 16 trials, the sum of ranks is 32, $p = 0.046$. For the other three categories, the rank sums are nonsignificant. For the projects, military and science/industrial categories the (sum of ranks, number of trials, p-value) are (70, 28, 0.53), (46, 19, 0.42), and (56, 22, 0.43), respectively. Thus, it appears that the targets that were the most homogeneous and were set to music with few or no words were the easiest to remote view and/or to match correctly in judging.

The only individual target for which the sum of ranks was significant is Project Deep Quest (8 trials, sum of ranks = 12, $p = 0.007$). This is the only target in the projects category that has a dynamic segment; the others consist of a series of still photographs. Also, the main theme of this target is water. We were concerned that the significance might be due to a bias toward choosing this target on the part of the judge, whether or not it was the intended target. To check this, we computed the rank sum for Project Deep Quest when it was the unintended target. The sum was 46, for 20 trials, $p = 0.24$, so the bias hypothesis can not explain the significant result.

In contrast, judges did appear to be biased against Project Ultra. Out of the 28 times it was included in either table, it was ranked last place 16 times, including 5 of the 10 times it was the intended target and 11 of the 18 times it was the unintended target. This target is quite different from Project Deep Quest because the theme is unclear even after observing the target, unless one is already familiar with Project Ultra.

Table 1

(U) RANKINGS FOR INTENDED TARGETS

| Category | Rank 1 | Rank 2 | Rank 3 | Rank 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Projects | | | | |
| Manhattan Project | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Project Blue Book | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Project Deep Quest | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Project Ultra | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| **Totals** | 9 | 5 | 5 | 9 |
| Military | | | | |
| Aircraft Carrier Takeoff | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Atomic Blasts | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Control Room | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Russians in Space | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| **Totals** | 4 | 5 | 8 | 2 |
| Natural | | | | |
| Greek Temple | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Ostriches | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Skiing | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Waterfall | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| **Totals** | 7 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| Science/Industrial | | | | |
| Bottling Factory | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Building Construction | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| John Glenn Launch | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Tacoma Narrows Bridge | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| **Totals** | 7 | 4 | 7 | 4 |

Table 2

(U) RANKINGS FOR UNINTENDED TARGETS

| Category | Rank 1 | Rank 2 | Rank 3 | Rank 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Projects | | | | |
| Manhattan Project | 7 | 9 | 6 | 2 |
| Project Blue Book | 7 | 5 | 7 | 3 |
| Project Deep Quest | 5 | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| Project Ultra | 0 | 3 | 4 | 11 |
| **Totals** | **19** | **24** | **22** | **19** |
| Military | | | | |
| Aircraft Carrier Takeoff | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| Atomic Blasts | 3 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| Control Room | 3 | 3 | 1 | 9 |
| Russians in Space | 4 | 4 | 6 | 0 |
| **Totals** | **15** | **14** | **11** | **17** |
| Natural | | | | |
| Greek Temple | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Ostriches | 1 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Skiing | 7 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Waterfall | 0 | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| **Totals** | **9** | **13** | **11** | **15** |
| Science/Industrial | | | | |
| Bottling Factory | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Building Construction | 5 | 4 | 2 | 4 |
| John Glenn Launch | 3 | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Tacoma Narrows Bridge | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 |
| **Totals** | **15** | **18** | **15** | **18** |

# IV CONCLUSIONS (U)

The results of this analysis are intriguing, since they suggest that the complexity of the target and/or the feedback may affect the quality of the results. The natural targets, the only group to achieve a significant sum of ranks, differed from the others in a few respects. First, they tended to be more homogeneous visually than the targets in the other three categories. Second, they were accompanied by music but few or no words. Third, they tended to represent more pleasant situations than the other target categories.

Two of these three features distinguishing the Natural target category also applied to the Project Deep Quest target. It represented a more pleasing situation than the other targets in the projects category, and it was also more homogeneous.

In conclusion, while we are not able to identify a single distinguishing factor from these results, it does appear that certain characteristics may enhance remote viewing quality. The targets for which significant results were achieved were those that were visually homogeneous. Further, from subjective reports of the viewers, they were the most appealing targets in the pool.